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41-9 NEVADA CLIMATE SUMMARY

FOR DECEMBER 1984

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Office of the
State Climatologist

Office:
226 Mackay Science
(702) 784-6921

Mail:
John W. James
State Climatologist
Dept. of Geography
University of Nevada
Reno, Nevada 89557

SYNOPSIS

Preliminary information indicates that temperatures were below normal over all of Nevada during December, especially in parts of the Central and Northeast portions of the State, where averages were as much as 8° below long term normals. Precipitation was also below normal in the northern half of the State, but well above normal in the south half. In fact, it was the wettest December of record at some locations in Southern Clark County. In addition, an unusually heavy snowfall occurred during mid month above the 3000 foot elevation in portions of Southern Nevada.

TEMPERATURE

Temperatures during December were below normal over Nevada, with the greatest departures in the Central and Northeast portions of the State. For example, Hawthorne averaged 8.5°, and Battle Mountain 8.1 degrees below normal. On the other hand, portions of the South and Northwest were less than 2° below normal (Las Vegas -1.4°, Boulder City -1.8°, and Reno -1.8°).

One important feature of December 1984 climate was the unusually cold temperature regime that plagued some areas during the second half of the month. No records were approached, but well below zero readings at Diamond Valley, near Eureka and west of Ely (-19°), Battle Mountain (-18°), Dyer, west of Tonopah near the California border (-14°), and Carvers Station, between Tonopah and Ely (-14°), were the coldest thus far this winter season. It also fell to -12° at both Ely and Elko and -9° at Caliente and Tonopah.

Very warm temperatures were not to be found in Nevada this month, but the mercury did manage to rise to 70° at Logandale, 67° at Laughlin, and 66° at Boulder City. As usual, great contrasts existed in such a large and topographically diverse state as Nevada, wherein Laughlin fell to the freezing mark only once during December (31°), with minima averaging 41.1°, while Battle Mountain lows averaged only 6.6°, with 12 days of readings at zero or below!

Heating requirements were greater than normal Statewide during December, ranging from over 1300 heating degree day units in the Northeast, to less than 500 in parts of the extreme South.

PRECIPITATION

It was unusually wet in Southern Nevada this December, and in some areas above 3000 feet an uncommon snowstorm prevailed during mid-month. In fact, this was the wettest December of record at both Boulder City and Searchlight, where 2.46"

and 4.07" of rain fell respectively. The previous wettest December at Boulder City was during 1940 when 1.96" fell, and at Searchlight during 1947, when 2.98" occurred. The Boulder City record is 53 years long, and at Searchlight records have been kept for the past 72 years. The December 1984 precipitation totals represent over 1/2 the annual normals at these two Clark County locations. It was even wetter at normally dry Laughlin, where Clark County Fire Department personnel recorded 4.32", with 12 days of measurable rainfall, and 1.12" in the 24 hours ending on the 8th. This was not the heaviest 24 hour total in Nevada during December, however, as Beatty 8 North observer Effie Spicer logged 1.89" on the 18th. This was as a result of an unusually heavy 12" snowfall that occurred there and in the surrounding area. For example, Yucca Flat had a record 24 hour total of 12", and the Lathrop Wells-Amargosa Valley Area from 8-14".

SUNSHINE AND WIND

An unusual amount of cloudiness persisted in Southern Nevada during December due to frequent storm activity. This caused well below normal sunshine in that area (e.g. Las Vegas 61% vs. a normal of 78%). Sunshine was only a little below normal in the Northeast (Ely 63% vs. normal of 65%) and the Northwest (Reno 58% vs. normal of 64%). However, at Winnemucca sunshine was well above average for December, with 66% and a normal of only 50%.

Average wind speeds were a little above normal over most of Nevada during December, although no very windy situations existed as is usually the case during some winter storms. For example, peak wind gusts reached only 43 mph at Reno, 40 mph at Las Vegas, 31 mph at Winnemucca and 34 mph at Ely. Wind gusts did reach over 70 mph on top of 9700 foot Slide Mountain near Reno.

SPECIAL NOTE OF INTEREST

Weather observers from two climate stations deserve special credit and special thanks for many years of dedicated weather data collection. At Boulder City the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation has operated the climate station there, consisting of temperature, precipitation and evaporation equipment, since 1931. They were recently recommended by the National Weather Service, Western Region Office, for a 50 year award for outstanding length of service. At nearby Searchlight, the Nevada Division of Highways has taken daily temperature and precipitation readings since 1941, and is now only seven years away from the same rare award.

NEVADA'S SNOWIEST LOCATION

The greatest season snowfall recorded at a manned observation site in Nevada was the 412" measured by Kingsbury Fire Department observers during the 1968-69 Winter Season at 7380 foot Daggett Pass, between the Lake Tahoe Basin and the Carson Valley. This site also holds the monthly snowfall record, as 139" was recorded during February 1969. In fact, the 3 month December 1968 - February 1969 total was 317". The snowpack reached 175" deep in February 1969, also a State record. The State's 24 hour snowfall record belongs to this lofty site too, as 36" fell on February 14-15, 1969, during that memorable snowy Sierra Nevada winter.

Next Month - a special 1984 climate summary.

NOTE:

Nevada is one of the few states where the State Climatologist position is completely unfunded. Costs that cover data collection, summarization, writing, typing, copying and mailing of the monthly Nevada Climate Summary have been covered ;

by a very small UNR grant, the UNR Geography Department, and personal monies of the State Climatologist. These funds are nearly depleted, so we ask that if you wish to continue to receive this report, please send a subscription price of \$10.00 per year, to the State Climatologist's Office to cover typing, copying and mailing only. This does not apply to the weather observers that supply data for this report, nor the State Climatologists to which it is sent. They will continue to receive it free of charge. If you wish to contribute additional money toward the State Climate Program, including library maintenance, badly needed data summary updates, etc., please send your tax deductible check to the UNR Foundation, earmarked for Nevada State Climate Office use only. After the January issue (to be mailed out in February) only subscribers will receive this summary. Thank you.

John W. James
State Climatologist for Nevada

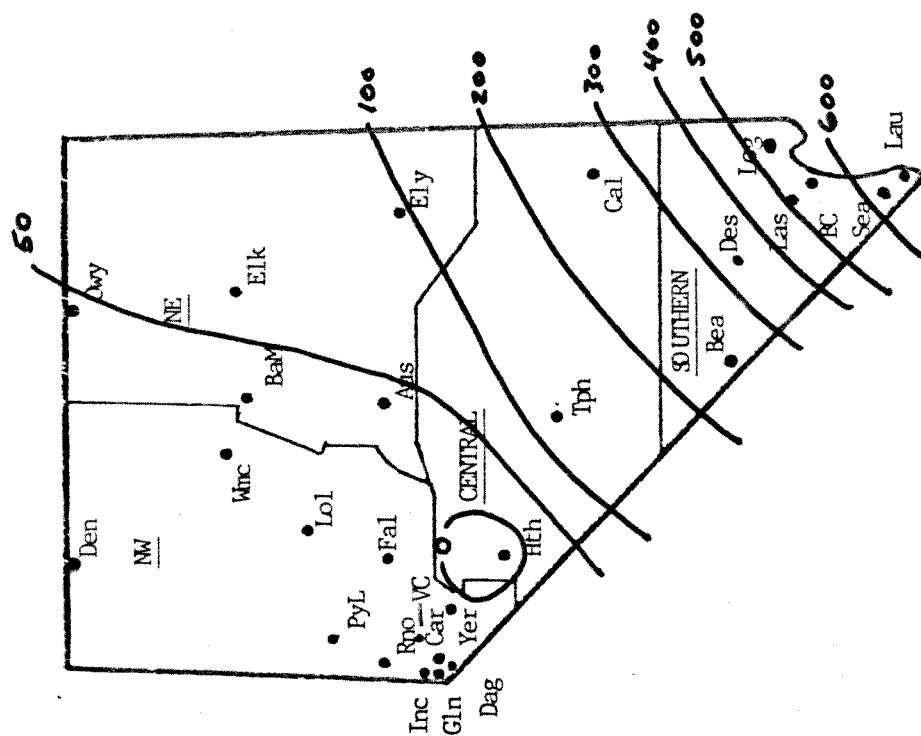
DECEMBER 1984

PRELIMINARY NEVADA CLIMATE DATA

LOCATION	ELEV	MAX	MIN	MEAN	DEPART	HIGHEST	LOWEST	HEATING DEGREE DAYS	DEPART	PRECIP	DEPART	GR. 24 HR	SNOWFALL
(Base = 65°)													
Northwest													
Carson City	4650'	41.7	18.1	29.9	-4.3	30th 52	18th 0	1081	+352	.21"	-1.91	1st .12	3"
Daggett Pass	7380	36.4	19.2	27.8	-	7th 50	14th 3	-	-	1.05	-	16th .65	16
Denio	4185	37.2	14.8	26.0	-	7th 49	19th -7	-	-	.25	-	.09	3
Fallon NAS	3935	45.4	20.2	33.8	-	10th 57	23rd 11	999	-	.03	-	16th .03	1
Glenbrook	6400	39.7	22.7	31.2	-2.6	25th 47	17th 7	1044	+83	.67	-2.52	15th .36	7
Incline	6525	36.6	20.8	28.7	-3.3	25th 43	17th 7	-	-	.88	-2.39	15th .34	13
Lovelock	3900	40.4	17.1	28.7	-	8th 50	20th 5	1123	-	.11	-	16th .07	1
Reno AP	4410	42.4	19.0	30.7	-1.8	11th 51	20th 7	1056	+48	.07	-1.14	16th .04	1½
Reno UNR	4550	42.6	22.9	32.7	-	30th 53	18th 10	-	-	.10	-	16th .04	½
Virginia City	6340	37.7	21.7	29.7	-4.4	23rd 50	17th 10	1097	+140	.62	-1.42	15th .42	7½
Winnemucca	4305	38.9	13.9	26.4	-4.0	8th 51	17th -6	1182	+115	.36	- .50	16th .26	4
Yerington	4375	43.5	17.5	30.5	-2.2	10th 54	25th 8	1060	+59	.01	- .59	4th .01	T
Northeast													
Austin	6605	-	-	-	-	25th 47	14th 1	-	-	.65	- .46	16th .38	11
Battle Mountain	4350	35.6	6.6	21.1	-8.1	8th 49	18th -18	1362	+252	.38	- .35	16th .37	7

LOCATION	ELEV	MAX	MIN	MEAN	DEPART	HIGHEST	LOWEST	HEATING		DEPART	PRECIP	GR.		
								DEGREE	DAYS			24 HR	SNOWFALL	
(Base = 65°)														
Elko	5135	33.9	7.9	20.9	-5.2	10th 44	17th -12	1360	+154	.45	-	.53	12th .26	5
Ely	6260	36.4	8.3	22.3	-3.8	7th 56	17th -12	1321	+112	.76	+	.01	19th .39	11½
Owyhee	5400	-	-	-	-	7th 46	20th -8	-	-	.72	-	.68	13th .28	7
Central														
Caliente	4865	39.8	18.8	29.3	-4.6	7th 53	17th -9	1106	+142	1.31	+	.70	19th .55	-
Hawthorne	4215	45.1	21.5	33.3	-8.5	12th 55	24th 8	987	+103	0	-	.32	0	0
Tonopah	5425	37.3	16.9	27.1	-5.2	7th 50	25th -9	1180	+166	.70	+	.45	20th .18	12
Southern														
Beatty 8N	3550	43.6	26.4	35.0	-	6th 58	17th 11	-	-	2.78	-	-	18th 1.90	14
Boulder City	2525	52.4	38.1	49.3	-1.8	7th 66	17th 29	612	+82	2.46	+	2.02	27th .89	0
Desert Rock	3300	47.3	30.4	38.8	-6.2	6th 58	23rd 20	808	+198	1.91	-	-	19th .65	6½
Las Vegas	2170	52.5	35.5	44.0	-1.4	7th 60	23rd 28	641	+33	1.68	+	1.36	27th .67	T
Laughlin	550	59.4	41.1	50.2	-	8th 67	25th 31	459	-	4.32	-	-	8th 1.12	0
Logandale	1320	57.8	36.0	46.9	-	17th 70	24th 28	-	-	2.14	-	-	27th .75	0
Searchlight	3540	-	-	-	-	7th 58	17th 25	-	-	4.07	+	3.48	19th 1.11	0

PERCENTAGE OF NORMAL PRECIPITATION
DECEMBER 1984



DEPARTURE OF MEAN TEMPERATURE
FROM NORMAL (F°)
DECEMBER 1984

